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whole mind, fixing it, analyzing it in the finest or coarsest manner, recomposing it, and again analyzing it, and always with a firm unshaken hand, and with the assurance that it will always remain as he has arranged it. It is, therefore, also clear, that this is not only a higher degree of labor, but an entirely new *kind* of mental labor, the like of which has never before been known, and that the faculty of working in this manner can be practised and exercised only upon the one object, which exists for it. Hence, all other thinkers, however accomplished and practised, will need time and diligence to gain a firm foothold in this science, and can by no means give a competent judgment upon it after the first or second reading. Is it then, to be supposed, that unpractised and unscientific persons, who have no other culture than that of memory, and who are not even capable of carrying on an objective-scientific argument, should be able to pass a judgment upon any detached proposition of that science, which they may have found in some newspaper or another, at the very first reading, just as if they had merely to say whether they

had already heard the same thing somewhere else or not?

At the same time, no study is so easy as the study of this science, as soon as but the very first ray of light concerning its true nature has risen upon students. This science presupposes no elementary knowledge of any kind, but merely ordinary mental culture. It does not weaken the mind, but strengthens and enlivens it. Its progress is altogether connected, and its method very simple and easily comprehended. Each single point of this science, which has been understood, throws a flood of light upon all the others.

The Science of Knowledge, therefore, is not inborn in man, as his five senses are, but can be acquired only through study. It was this I wished to convince you of, my reader, so that, if you have not studied it yet, and have no inclination to study it now, you may at least be careful not to make yourself ridiculous by talking about it; and secondly, so that you may know what to think, when other persons, however highly cultivated otherwise, talk about the Science of Knowledge, without having studied it any more than you have.

COUSIN UPON KANT'S DOCTRINE OF THE ABSOLUTE.

[By FRANCIS A. HENRY.]

The ultimate question of all philosophy is the question of the Absolute. Is there an Universal, a Necessary, an Unconditioned on which the Finite and Particular depend? Though doubtless every truth is this or that truth, has it not in it a something which constitutes it truth independently of its particular elements? Is there a substance, so to speak, in which the relative inheres, a foundation on which it rests, and of which all particulars are the partial representation? In analysing the Related do we not come at last to an Unrelated, the ground on which all the former reposes—itself groundless; and will not every process of explanation lead sooner or later to an inexplicable?

All else in philosophy leads up to this culmination which crowns the synthesis of

thought, and according to its holding on this point a philosophic system may be judged. For the fundamental principle of all science is the Platonic axiom:—There can be no science of that which fluctuates or passes away. The Absolute, then, is the true scientific element. The scientific spirit consists in constantly bringing the Absolute into the Relative, and constantly leading up the Relative to the Absolute. Thus all philosophy may be summed up under these three heads:—Rational Psychology, or science of the Absolute as idea, in its relation to reason; Ontology, or science of the Absolute outside of reason, in its relation to existence; and Logic, or the passage from the first to the last, from idea to being.

It is evident to a superficial observation

that the current of modern thought sets strongly against a belief in the Absolute, or at least against a belief in the possibility of a science of Ontology. The modern German Idealism founded by Fichte and developed by Schelling has ceased to exert much influence on the mind of the age, while outside of Germany Hamilton and Comte, Spencer and Mill agree in representing the notion of the Absolute as a mere negative, the opposite of the Relative and the Conditioned which alone is conceivable and cognizable by the mind. This doctrine has obtained its present prevalence mainly through the influence of one book, the "*Critique of Pure Reason*."

After the great edifice of Cartesianism had fallen into decay, weakened by unsound speculations and ill-supported hypotheses, a reactionary spirit of positivism arose from its ruins which refused to put faith in anything beyond the demonstrable. To the despotic government of dogmatism succeeded the anarchy and the rebellious spirit of skepticism. From this impulse sprang the philosophy of Locke which seemed for a time to restore order in the world of thought by bringing all knowledge under the authority of Experience, and bounding it within the sphere of sensation. It soon became dominant in England and France; but a system founded on such partial principles was not slow to wander into wild extravagances and fall into a labyrinth of inconsistencies, till finally Hume swept away the entire fabric by demonstrating that the only logical result from Locke's principles was universal skepticism or nescience. And now all authorities seemed to have been listened to in vain, all methods tried unsuccessfully. The last and most hopeless stage was reached, that of apathy. It was not the apathy of indifference however but of discouragement, and meant merely that the old philosophy was dead and that there needed another. The dawn of the new day was at hand. Startled at the work Hume had effected, Reid set himself to reexamine Locke's analysis of the mind, and his profounder observation disclosed many elements before unrecognized. It proved that the Intelligence supposes

principles which as the conditions of its activity cannot be the results of its operation; that the mind contains cognitions which, as primitive, universal, necessary, cannot be explained as generalizations from the Contingent and Particular, about which alone Experience is conversant. Some enumeration of these primary principles of the intellect was attempted, and thus a Rational Psychology, or doctrine of the Absolute in the mind of man established.

But what was merely a sketch in Scotland became a finished drawing in the hands of the philosopher of Königsberg. With a mental grasp and keenness of insight that have gained for him the name of the modern Aristotle, Kant shed the light of his profound analysis on the deep recesses of the human mind in order to reconstruct philosophy upon the basis of a complete and accurate psychology. His enterprise was nothing less than to create a new philosophy which could be placed between the old dogmatism and the Sensism of Locke and Condillac in security against the attacks of Hume. At first little read and almost unnoticed, the "*Critique of Pure Reason*" gradually made its way among thinkers, at the end of eight or ten years had produced a marked effect on Germany, and ended by effecting a renovation of philosophy as complete as Klopstock had wrought in the national literature.

Kant's philosophy is the highest development of spiritualism that the eighteenth century produced, but with all our admiration for his genius and for the great results he has achieved, his work must on the whole be pronounced a failure, since its ultimate result is to declare that pure reason, as purely subjective, and conscious of nothing but itself, is unable to evince the reality of anything beyond its own personal modifications; that Ontology, or a knowledge of the Absolute in itself, is beyond the compass of our faculties.

The following citations from Cousin's criticism upon Kant, and others of his writings, it is hoped will lead some to reopen the question of the Absolute, and to test for themselves the strength of the

grounds on which rests the refined skepticism which has so powerfully affected the course of thought since his day :

* "If it is true that since Descartes the question of the veracity of consciousness has been the chief question in philosophy, this is especially the case in the system of Kant. To solve this question Kant undertook an analysis of consciousness, and the profound and original way in which he solved it has impressed a peculiar character upon all his philosophy, and has decided that of the philosophy of Germany. Kant was right in placing first among philosophic questions that of the objective validity of our cognitions, and he clearly saw that the scientific solution of the problem must be sought in a profound analysis of the mechanism of the human intelligence. But if his method was the right one, did he always follow it exactly? Before entering upon a general discussion of the Kantian doctrine, let us remark in the first place that his opinion is in contradiction with that of mankind—with common sense. Kant denies the objective reality of space and time; mankind, on the contrary, believe in this reality, and manifest their belief every moment by their words and actions. When I speak of the situation of this room in relation to the surrounding rooms, and when in this room I distinguish the place where I am from the one where you are by saying *here* and *there*, I never take it into my head to think that when I speak thus it is merely for the sake of making a distinction of my own, and of putting my sensible impressions in a kind of order.

"I believe that I really occupy a certain portion of a space which exists independently of me, and which would not cease to exist even if I should cease to have the idea of it; and if I rise to go towards you, or to pass into another room, I believe that every one of my steps measures a portion of this space, and that in going towards you, or into the other room, I actually change my place, that is, pass through different points of space. Should one dispute with me on the soundness of this be-

lief, and tell me that these places I distinguish, these different points of space I pass through, that this space itself, have no existence in reality; that there only appears in all this a manner of representing phenomena to oneself,—in vain would he speak to me in the name of philosophy, he would not shake my conviction.

"Kant's doctrine opposes itself to common sense, no less on the notion of time than on that of space. When a man says that it has taken him an hour to go from one place to another, just as he believes that he has actually passed over a certain portion of space, so he believes he has employed in passing over it a certain portion of time; and if you tell him that all this exists only in his mind, and that in reality there is no such thing as time or parts of time, he will laugh at you, or he will not understand what you mean. Granted that the divisions we establish in time, like those we establish in space, are more or less arbitrary, and that in dividing time into minutes, hours, days, and years, our only object is to understand each other; yet should one maintain that such divisions are not divisions of a real time at all, that what we call time is a pure form of our minds by means of which we represent phenomena to ourselves,—his opinion would only vainly conflict with that of mankind, it could not prevail against it.

"Let us turn to another part of Kant's theory and choose among the categories of the understanding that, for instance, of causality. Is the principle of causality in the eyes of mankind merely a form, a purely subjective condition of the application of our mind to phenomena—to sensible objects; or do they not rather believe that just as there is a real something, a phenomena that begins to be, so this something, this phenomenon, has its real and objective cause? To answer this question it only needs to look at the way men are every instant applying the principle of causality. A cruel murder is committed; the public is at once indignant at the perpetrator of the deed, although it may not know who he is, and justice follows in his pursuit, not resting till it has discovered him; and even if it cannot discover him,

*Course of the History of Modern Philosophy, 1st Series, Vol. V., Lect. viii.

it does not the less persist in assuming that the murder had a real cause. When the criminal is seized, he is tried; and if there is sufficient proof against him, he is put to death.

"This is what takes place, and surely all this does not come to pass merely because we apply the principle of causality to events in order to connect them together in our mind, but because when we apply this principle we accord to it implicitly or explicitly that objective validity which Kant's system refuses to it. According to his system, in the case we have supposed, the public would be aroused, justice would institute a search, a man would be put to death only to satisfy a law of our mind which would have us conceive a cause, indeed, but a cause purely ideal wherever we see an event produced! Let us not be reproached for combatting Kant's theory by ridicule, for ridicule, it might be answered, is only the expression, and, so to speak, the loudest cry of common sense, and consequently may be properly employed against philosophy whenever it goes astray as it does here.

"Consider the opinion of Kant on the *Me* and compare it with the opinion of mankind. To Kant the idea of the being which we are, presents nothing else than a logical bond which serves to collect the psychological phenomena into one whole. Is this the opinion of common sense? When a man speaks of himself, does he believe that that which constitutes his personality, that which makes him an individual, one and the same, is this logical connection which he establishes among his own modifications in order to bring them into a certain unity? And when he speaks of individuals, whom he distinguishes from himself, and from each other, does he believe that in this he is only grouping certain phenomena around certain unities which he calls for convenience's sake James or John, but to which he accords no objective reality? In a word, is the idea of the *Me* nothing for us but a regulative principle, and the distinction of individuals a mere affair of classification? It is very clear that the *Me* of Kant's system is not the *Me* of consciousness. We may

add that his God, or at least the God of his metaphysic, is equally far from being the God of humanity. It is in fact a pure ideal which crowns human consciousness and enables the mind to reach the highest possible unity, but which can have only an abstract existence in the mind. Is it this ideal without reality, this doubtful object of a regulative idea, that mankind salutes as the first substance and cause of all things, the being of beings and the father of the human race?

"It appears from the foregoing how remote are the results at which Kant arrives from the common notions of men; but since, however strange they may be, they are, according to Kant, the fruit of philosophy, let us examine them philosophically and see whether a sound criticism of human knowledge can admit them, or whether on the contrary it will not sanction the opinion of mankind.

"Why does Kant deny the objective reality of space and time? This is the answer: even if we could not cease to affirm the real existence of time and space, we should always be unable to establish such affirmations by reason of the subjective character with which they are impressed. He denies the objective validity of the principle of causality, and in general of all the categories of the understanding, for the same reason: to conclude from the subjective to the objective cannot be a valid conclusion according to the Critical Philosophy. For the same reason, though he does not deny the objective validity of the idea of God, he dares not affirm it. Thus the foundation on which all Kant's skepticism rests, is in the last analysis, nothing but the character of subjectivity with which all the developments of our faculty of Knowing are necessarily stamped. This then is his trouble.

"But is this subjectivity the only form of reason? How do I know that my reason is subjective? Because when I have tried to affirm the contrary of what the principles of reason naturally teach me I have found my efforts useless, that is, I have seen the necessity of its principles. It is in the feeling of this necessity, in this observation, namely, that I cannot but admit such

or such a truth, that the subjective character of my reason reveals itself. But does the mind set out with this observation? We have just seen that it supposes reflection, for it supposes that the mind *bends back upon itself* to try to call in question the certainty of its principles. Now Kant's theory implies that the mind sets out by reflection, by these attempts at doubt in which it discovers the necessity of the principles of reason, and thus the subjectivity of reason itself. But in order that the mind should seek to affirm anything contrary to the principles of reason, it must have first affirmed something in accordance with those principles, without any return upon itself; consequently it must be admitted that human reason has primitively nothing of the subjective character which Kant has made a weapon against it, and that it must begin to act by a pure affirmation, absolute, without any suspicion of error. After this it returns upon itself; it tries to affirm the contrary of what it had at first affirmed spontaneously; and as it cannot succeed in this, it persists in believing what it believed before, but its mode of believing is changed; from being spontaneous it has become reflective. In the first mode reason contains nothing personal or subjective but what the relation of every apperception to consciousness must unavoidably bring into consciousness; in the second mode it contracts that decided character of subjectivity which is imposed upon it by the intervention of reflection, that is to say, of the will, the faculty on which the human personality especially displays itself.

"Unfortunately Kant has not seen that this form of reason is in some sort foreign to it, and inferior; he has not seized reason at that pure and lofty degree where reflection, will, and personality are as yet absent. If he had known this intuition, this spontaneous revelation which is the primitive mode of reason, perhaps he might have renounced his skepticism. For this skepticism rests as we have said on the assumption that the laws of reason are subjective, personal to man; but here is a mode of reason where these same laws are, so to speak, freed from all subjectivity,

where reason shows itself almost entirely impersonal. Is not this sufficient for Kant? Does he wish in order to believe in the objectivity and validity of reason that it should cease to make its appearance in a particular subject; in man, for instance? But if reason is outside of the subject which I am, it is nothing for me. For me to have consciousness of it, it must descend into me, it must make itself mine, and in this sense become subjective. A reason which is not mine, which entirely universal as it is in itself, does not incarnate itself, as it were, in my consciousness, is for me as though it did not exist. Consequently to wish that reason in order to be trustworthy should cease entirely to be subjective, is to demand an impossibility. It is to demand what God himself could not do. Suppose that God wishes to give me a knowledge of the external world. If the *Me* is to remain *Me*, and if the *Not-Me* is to remain *Not-Me*, the *Me* can only know the *Not-Me* by means of the faculties which belong to it, and in this sense it will be true that it can only attain the objective subjectively. Attempt to conceive of its being otherwise, and you find the contrary an absurdity.

"Further, God himself cannot know what is not himself otherwise than thus, because he cannot know otherwise than by his own intelligence. In the terms of Kant's philosophy the divine reason also would be tainted with subjectivity because this reason resides in a determined subject which is God. If then this subjectivity necessarily involves skepticism, here is God himself condemned to a skepticism from which he can no more free himself than we men can. This is what Kant must have admitted if he was consistent: or else, if the knowledge which God has by the action of his intelligence does not involve skepticism for him, no more does the subjectivity of human reason entail it upon us.

"Now it will be easy to show that Kant made a mistake when he was willing to take the part of such a skepticism, and that the principles of the Kantian critique once admitted, logic destroys all that he thought he had been able to preserve.

"If he denies the objective reality of space and time, Kant does not deny the existence of the material world; he has even given a demonstration of it. But this demonstration rests on the authority of our faculty of knowing. Now by what privilege does our faculty of knowing, which has a character eminently subjective when it furnishes us the ideas of space and time, acquire an objective validity with regard to the natural world—to those phenomena, that is, which we can only represent to ourselves by means of the ideas of space and time, ideas destitute of all objectivity according to Kant? It matters little that Kant tells us he admits nothing but phenomenal existence in the material world; however he admits it, it is as something really external, and this something really external, phenomenon or being—he can admit only through the principle of causality, or through some other principle which he declares purely subjective. If this is indeed the fact, why not acknowledge that when we represent to ourselves anything in space and time we only transport to the object what belongs solely to the subject. We cannot allow him a right to admit the external world, whose existence he would attempt to demonstrate, while he does not recognize that of space and time. With his subjective reason he is condemned to remain locked up within the limits of the subject.

"But within these limits what remains for him? The idea of the *Me*, of the one and identical substance which we are, has for him a purely ideal validity, and all that he can admit in the mind are the phenomena of consciousness, nothing more. But what are these surviving phenomena? If the *Me* has no reality, can the phenomenal determinations by which its existence is manifested be anything? If the *Me* is obliterated, if it is made an unknown quantity, or an abstraction, must not the same be done to phenomena? The internal phenomena, and the subject of these phenomena, are given us, we have seen, in one and the same psychological fact; we are free to consider them separately, that is, in a state of abstraction; but if after separating them we reject the reality of the

subject, while we hold to that of phenomena, we fall into an evident contradiction. In fine, Kant has no more right to admit psychological phenomena than he has to admit any external phenomenon. What remains for him then? Nihilism. A total skepticism is the legitimate result of the Critique of Pure Reason. It stops short, we know, of its true limit, but this is not Kant's only inconsistency.

"While in theory he denies all objective reality to *a priori* ideas, in his practical work he readily accords this objectivity to the idea of duty; while in the one he thinks himself incompetent to affirm the existence of free will or that of God, in the other he believes himself able to assert both with entire certainty. But is there at bottom a real distinction between moral and metaphysical principles? What are the characteristics of the moral law? Its necessity and universality. But does not Kant admit that these are the characteristics of every principle that he recognizes in metaphysic, of the principle of causality, for example? Why then does he take metaphysical principles to be purely subjective, and simple forms of our mind, when the law of duty is in his eyes an objective law, independent of the subject who conceives it, and possessing an absolute validity? Moral principles and metaphysical principles both derive from the same faculty, the reason; Kant himself admits this, since he talks of speculative reason and practical reason. He distinguishes here not two different faculties, but two applications, or, as he says, two different employments of reason. If then he denies the trustworthiness of the speculative reason, he must that of the practical reason too; he must admit that the moral law depends upon our individual nature, and that outside of us it has no bearing. Now what becomes of the new basis of Kant's moral dogmatism? What becomes of all the objective existence he reestablishes on this basis? Skepticism sweeps away the faculty of reason entire, in all its applications. All the consequences at which we arrive on setting out from the law of duty can only have, like that law itself, an ideal and subjective

character. This is what Kant would be obliged to assert himself, if, in his desire to save morality from the wreck of his metaphysic, he did not sue logic to relax its rigor. But logic is inexorable: Kant must either renounce his moral dogmatism and accept all the consequences of his metaphysical skepticism; or, if he is not willing to renounce certainty in morality, he must accept dogmatism in metaphysic also, and recognize the validity of the speculative reason as well as that of the practical, for there is no essential difference between them.

"It follows from what we have said that absolute skepticism must be the final conclusion of Kant's philosophy as well in its moral part as in its speculative. Such indeed is the necessary conclusion of every system that calls in question the authority of our faculty of knowing, instead of directing it, and keeping it from going astray by constantly recalling it to the circumspection which is required of it: for caution is not skepticism. If Skepticism were consistent it would be the negation of all science and all philosophy, while a severe examination of the processes which dogmatism employs is of great advantage to philosophy. As is almost always the case Kant has exceeded his intention, and though his wish was only to confine human knowledge within its actual limits, his system, pushed to its consequences, destroys knowledge completely. Let us take warning by this example; and if it is useful and salutary to give place to doubt in philosophy, let us be careful to give it only the place that belongs to it. Let us not pretend that there rests no cloud upon the questions that philosophy raises, but neither let us believe that the human mind can affirm nothing with certainty, and that upon the points where its destiny is especially interested it should be condemned to error or to ignorance."

In the year 1818, in his *Course on the Absolute*, Cousin had entered upon the same discussion.

* "Let us understand the new aspect the ontological question has taken in the hands

* Lecture iii. On the Validity of *a priori* Principles.

of Kant. He has established, like Reid and ourself, the existence of universal and necessary principles; but he has made the immense concession to the empirical school that these principles are nothing more than regulative laws of thought, that their function is only to put our impressions in order, and that beyond these impressions, beyond experience, they are powerless. This position started German philosophy on a road at whose end was an abyss. In vain did this great man open a learned and subtle controversy with Hume: it is he that has been overcome in this contest; it is Hume that remains master of the field. Kant's theory brings us back to that Conceptualism of the middle age which, concentrating truth in the human intelligence, makes of the nature of things a phantasm of the mind which everywhere throws itself outside of itself, at once triumphant and powerless, since it produces everything, yet its productions are only shadows. The function of philosophy is to explain facts; but if in its explanation it destroy what it pretends to explain, it no longer explains, it imagines. Here the great fact to be explained is the belief of the human race, and the system of Kant annihilates it. We all believe *a priori* principles to be true in themselves, and true even if our minds were not here to conceive of them; we consider them as independent of ourselves, and as imposing upon our intelligence by the force of the truth which is in them. Thus to express correctly what passes within us we must reverse Kant's proposition, and instead of saying with him: these principles are the necessary laws of our mind, therefore they can have no absolute validity outside of our mind; we ought rather to say: these principles have an absolute validity in themselves, this is why we cannot but believe in them.

"Let us return here to that spontaneous intuition of truth which Kant had no knowledge of, held captive as he was in the circle of reflection by his scholastic habits of mind.

"Is it true that there is no judgment even affirmative in form but what is mingled with negation? It seems indeed that every af-

firmative judgment is at the same time negative, since to affirm that a thing exists is to deny its non-existence. If this is the case, every judgment whether its form be affirmative or negative, for these two forms return one to the other, supposes a previous doubt as to the existence of the thing in question, some exercise of reflection that is, at the conclusion of which the mind feels itself obliged to pass such or such a judgment; so that from this point of view the ground of the judgment seems to be its necessity; and then comes the well known objection: If you judge thus only because it is impossible for you not to, you have only yourself and your own modes of conceiving for guaranty of the truth; it is the human mind carrying its laws out of itself; it is the subject making the object in its own image without ever getting out of the circle of subjectivity.

"We reply by going right to the root of the difficulty; it is not true that all our judgments are negative. We grant that in the reflective state every affirmative judgment supposes a negative judgment and reciprocally. But does reason act only under the condition of reflection? Is there not a primitive affirmation which implies no negation? Just as we often act without deliberating, without premeditating the action, and, as in this case we manifest a free activity, though free with an unreflecting freedom, so reason often perceives truth without passing through doubt. Reflection is a return upon consciousness, or upon some other operation different from itself. It is impossible therefore that it should be found in any primitive act; every judgment that contains it presupposes another where it is not. We arrive thus at a judgment pure from all reflection, an affirmation without admixture of negation, an immediate intuition, legitimate daughter of the natural energy of thought, like the inspiration of the poet and the instinct of the hero. Such is the first act of the faculty of knowing. If we contradict this primitive affirmation, the faculty of knowing turns back upon itself, it examines itself, it tries to call in question the truth it has perceived: it cannot; it affirms again what it had affirmed at first,

but with the new sentiment that it is not in its power to escape from the evidence of this truth. Then, and then only, appears this character of necessity and subjectivity which has been turned against the truth, as if the truth lost its own validity by penetrating further into the mind and triumphing over doubt; as if reflective evidence were any the less evidence from being reflective; as if the necessary conception were the only form or the first form of the apperception of truth! The skepticism of Kant, which common sense gets rid of so easily, is pushed to extremity, and forced into its entrenchments by the distinction between spontaneous and reflective reason. Reflection is the field of the combats which reason sustains with itself, with doubt, sophistry, and error; but above reflection is a region of light and peace, where reason perceives truth without return upon itself, for the simple reason that truth is truth, and that God has given reason power to perceive it, as he has made the eye to see and the ear to hear. Analyze with impartiality the fact of spontaneous apperception, and you will satisfy yourself that there is nothing subjective about it, but what it is impossible it should not have, that is, the *Me*, which appears in the fact without constituting it. The *Me* enters inevitably into every cognition, for it is the subject of it. Reason perceives truth directly, but it doubles itself, as it were, in consciousness, and this produces knowing. Consciousness is here as witness, not as judge; the only judge is reason, the faculty both subjective and objective together, according to the language of Germany, which attains absolute truth immediately, almost without any personal intervention on our part, although it cannot enter into exercise unless the person precede it, or is added to it.

"Spontaneous apperception constitutes natural logic; reflective conception is the foundation of logic proper. The one rests on itself, *verum index sui*; the other on the impossibility that reason should not yield to the truth and believe it. The form of the first is affirmation accompanied with absolute security, and without even the suspicion of a possible negation; the

form of the second is reflective affirmation ; that is, the impossibility of denying, and so the necessity of affirming. The idea of negation governs ordinary logic, whose affirmations are only the laborious product of two negations. Natural logic proceeds by affirmations—expressions of a simple faith which instinct alone produces and sustains.

“In truth, when we see the father of German philosophy losing himself in the labyrinth of the problem of the subjectivity and the objectivity of primary principles, we are almost ready to pardon Reid for having disregarded this problem, and contenting himself with repeating that the absolute truth of these principles rests on the veracity of our faculties, and that as to their veracity we can have no other testimony than their own.

“‘To explain,’ he says, ‘why we are persuaded by our senses, by consciousness, by all our faculties, is an impossibility. We say this is so, this cannot be otherwise, and we reach the end. Is it not the expression of an irresistible belief, of a belief that is the voice of nature, and against which we struggle in vain? Do we wish to penetrate further, to demand of each of our faculties what are its titles to our confidence, and refuse it until it shall have produced them? Then I fear that this extreme wisdom will only lead us to folly, and that for not having been willing to submit to the common lot of humanity, we shall be altogether deprived of the light of common sense.’

“To state the conclusion of our argument :—I. Kant's doctrine, which is based on the necessary character of rational principles as weakening their objective authority, only applies to the form imposed on these principles by reflection, and does not reach to their spontaneous application where the character of necessity has not yet appeared.

“II. After all, to conclude with the human race from the necessity of believing to the truth of what is believed is not a bad conclusion ; for it is reasoning from the effect to the cause, from the sign to the thing signified.

“III. Besides, the validity of principles

is above all demonstration. Psychological analysis discovers in the fact of intellectual intuition an absolute affirmation, free from a touch of doubt ; it proclaims it, and this is equivalent to a demonstration. To demand any other demonstration is to demand an impossibility of the reason, since absolute principles being indispensable to every demonstration can be demonstrated only by themselves.”

In the lectures of 1828, after his triumphant return from exile, Cousin recurs again to the distinction between the spontaneous and reflective activity of reason. From the same premises he arrives at an opposite conclusion to that of Kant, whereas the latter argued from the necessity of rational principles, or the inability of the subject to free himself from their control, to the subjectivity of these principles, or the restriction of their legitimate application to the personality of man, as laws of human thought ; Cousin argues from this same necessity to the objectivity of principles, that is, to the impersonality of reason.

*“Is reason purely human, to speak strictly, or is it only human because it makes its appearance in man? Does reason belong to you—is it yours? What is it to be yours and mine? I wish to move my arm, and I move it ; I take such a resolution ; this resolution is exclusively mine, I can impute it to no one else ; it belongs to me ; and this is so true that, if I please, at the very instant I can take a contrary resolution—I can produce another movement because it is the essence of my will to be free, to do or not to do as it pleases. Is it the same with the perception of reason? Reason conceives a mathematical truth ; can it change this conception, as my will just now changed my resolution? In vain you attempt to conceive that two and two are not four, or that right is not obligatory. Reason does not modify itself as it pleases ; you do not think as you wish to. All that is free is yours ; what is not free is not yours ; freedom constitutes personality. It provokes a smile to hear the declamations of the upholders of authority against the individual reason. In truth

* Lecture v. Course of 1828.

there is nothing less individual than reason. If it were individual we should master it as we master our resolutions and our volitions; we should be continually changing its acts, that is, our conceptions. If these conceptions were only individual, we should not dream of imposing them on any other individual, for to impose one's individual notions on another person would be an extravagant tyranny. But things are not so; the fact is that we call those crazy who do not admit the mathematical relations of numbers, or the difference between the beautiful and the ugly, and the just and unjust. Why? Because we know it is not the individual who constitutes these conceptions, or, in other terms, that reason has in itself something universal and absolute; that it is obligatory upon every individual, and that while one individual knows himself to be obliged by it, he knows that all others are so likewise. The reason in us is not purely individual then, since it appears to us to be the law of all individuals. Hence that sublime conjecture of Fenelon: "O! Reason, art not thou the God whom I seek?" Reason in itself is universal and absolute, and consequently would be infallible, but that fallen as it is in man, and brought into relation with the senses, the passions, and the imagination, from being infallible as it is in itself, it has now become fallible. It does not mistake, but that in which it leads it astray: hence its aberrations; they are numerous, and since they derive from a relation, which in the present state of things is our inevitable condition, they themselves are inevitable. But truth misunderstood is not on that account changed or destroyed; it subsists independently of the reason, which in its present state perceives it imperfectly. Truth is independent of our reason because its true subject is the substance of the absolute, that incorruptible intelligence of which ours is a fragment. * * * * *

"I will to think, and I think; but do I never think without willing to? Carry yourself back to the first act of the intelligence, for the intelligence must have had

its first act, before which you were ignorant that you were an intelligence—the intelligence only acquiring knowledge of itself by its acts, or by one act at least; before this act which declares it it was not in your power to suspect its existence, and you were entirely ignorant of it. Now when for the first time the intelligence manifested itself, it is clear that it did not do so voluntarily. It did manifest itself, however, and you had a more or less vivid consciousness of it. What must have taken place at this starting point of the intelligence, in this phase of it, which no longer subsists and which can never return? To think is to affirm; the first affirmation was neither voluntary nor reflective, neither can it have been an affirmation blended with negation, it was then a pure affirmation, an instinctive apperception of truth. Now what is there in this primitive affirmation? All that there will be afterwards in reflection. But while all is here, it is here under another form. We do not begin by searching for ourselves, for that would suppose our knowing already that we are; but there comes a day, an instant, when, without having sought, we find ourselves; we affirm our existence with a security with which no doubt is blended, because it is pure from all reflection; we perceive ourselves with certainty, but without the clear discernment of reflection; in the same way we perceive the world, (*the Not-Me*, finite) we feel the limitations and imperfections of these, and we perceive vaguely something other and better to which we refer ourselves and the world. The intelligence naturally perceives all this, but while it perceives it with perfect certainty, it cannot but do so in a somewhat confused manner at first.

"Such is the primitive affirmation: it is a judgment, but a self-evident judgment; resting on that evidence which is called intuitive, to distinguish it from that which is obtained by the laborious processes of induction and deduction. The intuition of truth is a true inspiration. Inspiration, in every language, means an apperception of truth, without intervention of the will or mingling of the personality; it does not belong to us; it comes at its own

time, and we can neither retain it nor drive it away. It is an activity unquestionably, and a high activity, but it is not the reflective, the personal activity. In certain cases enthusiasm enters into inspiration, that powerful emotion which snatches the soul from its habitually subordinate condition, and sets free in it the lofty and divine part of its nature. Man not being able to attribute inspiration and enthusiasm to himself, ascribes them to God, with the truths which they reveal to him. Is he wrong in this? Surely not, for what is God? He is the eternal reason, the first substance and the first cause of truth that man perceives. When man, then, pays homage to God for truth which he cannot attribute to his own personality, nor to the impressions the world makes upon his senses, he refers them to their true source. The intuition of truth without reflection,—inspiration,—is a sort of revelation, that natural revelation made to all men, which is the light within us that lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

“So in the infancy of civilization, he who possesses the gift of inspiration in a higher degree than his fellows, passes for the confidant and interpreter of God. He is so for others, for he is so in his own eyes, and he is so in fact in a profoundly philosophic sense.

“Remark, too, this particular effect of inspiration. When man, hurried away by the rapid and vivid apperception of truth, tries to express in words what passes within him, he can do so only in words as wonderful as the ideas they attempt to convey. The first form, the natural language of inspiration, is poetry. Mankind does not begin with prose, but with poetry, because it does not begin with reflection, but with intuition. Hence again it follows that we do not begin with science, but with faith. In the strictest sense faith is an unlimited belief, which we have not made, but which governs us, and is for us a sacred authority, which we invoke at once against others and against ourselves. Now this characteristic of faith, which, by and by, in the deplorable conflicts of religion and philosophy, will be opposed to reason,—this characteristic is precisely that

of the reason itself; for it is reason that speaks to us as a sovereign, and that first reveals to us all truths necessary to the human race; so that reason and faith blend in the primitive intuition of truth.

“Spontaneous thought enters into exercise by its own power, and gives us ourselves, the world, and God; ourselves and the world with limitations vaguely perceived, and God without limitation; the whole in a synthesis, where the clear and obscure are blended together. By degrees reflection applies itself to this phenomenon; then everything clears up and determines itself; the *Me* separates itself from the *Not-Me*, these in their opposition and their connection give us a clear idea of the finite; and as the finite cannot be sufficient for itself, it supposes and implies the infinite, and here you have the categories of the *Me* and the *Not-Me*, the finite and the infinite, etc. But what is the source of these categories? The spontaneous apperception; and since there is nothing more in reflection than in spontaneity, in analysis than in the original synthesis, the categories in their developed and scientific form contain nothing more than the intuition. And how have you obtained these categories! Once more, you have obtained them by analysis, that is, by reflection. Now the necessary element of reflection is the will, and the will is the person, it is yourself. The categories obtained by reflection have then the appearance, from their relation to reflection and will, of being personal; they have so much the appearance of personality that they have been considered laws of our nature, by those who have not explained themselves very fully, as to what ‘our nature’ is, and the greatest analytic mind of modern times, after separating the categories from sensation, and every empirical element, after enumerating and classifying them, and attributing to them an irresistible power, finding them in the depths of consciousness, where personality resides, concludes that they are only laws of our person, and modes of our thinking. Kant, after having conquered the categories from Sensualism, has left them powerless in that subjective condition, which is only their reflective

form. As if, far from our constituting the truths which reason reveals to us, it were not our honor to attain to, and participate in them! For who has ever said: My truth, or your truth. The spontaneous character of reason guaranties the independence of the truths perceived by reason; nor is it surprising that reason should bring us to know being, since itself is the true substance, and the absolute essence; reason alone is self-determined.

"Reflection, doubt, skepticism, belong to a few; pure apperception, spontaneous faith, to all; spontaneity is the genius of humanity, as philosophy is the genius of individual men. Doubtless inspiration manifests itself in some highly endowed natures more strikingly than in others, but with more or less energy, thought develops itself in all thinking beings, and it is the identity of spontaneity in the human race, with the absolute faith it engenders that constitutes the identity of humanity. Where is the man who in the spontaneous action of his intelligence, does not believe in his own existence and in that of the world? This is evident as to these: it is not less so as to God. Leibnitz has said: There is being in every proposition. But a proposition is only a thought expressed, and if there is being in every proposition, it is because there is being in every thought. Now the most imperfect idea of being, implies an idea,—more or less clear, but a real idea,—of perfect being, that is, of God. Again, to think is to believe and to know that we think, it is to trust in our thought, it is to trust in the principle of thought; therefore it is to believe in the existence of this principle, which being neither the Me, nor the world, but God Himself, it follows that every thought implies an instinctive faith in God, and that there is no such thing as natural atheism.

"I do not say merely that there is no language where the name of God may not be found, for if you could show me dictionaries where this name does not occur, I should not be disturbed. I should only ask you, is there a man that speaks this language who thinks, and puts faith in his thought? Does he believe he exists, for

instance? If he believes this, he believes that his thought, the idea of his existing is worthy of faith; he has faith then in the principle of thought, and this principle, whether he know it or not, is God. Every serious conviction rests on a concealed faith in thought, in reason, in God. Every utterance is an act of faith; thus in the infancy of society the first expression in language is a hymn. Search the history of language, of society at their remotest periods, and you will find nothing anterior to lyric poetry, to hymns and litanies. So true it is that every primitive conception is a spontaneous apperception, stamped with faith, an inspiration accompanied by enthusiasm, that is to say, a religious movement of the soul. Here, I repeat, is the identity of the human race. Everywhere, in all generations of humanity, and in all the individuals of a generation, reason, in its instinctive form, is the same. Whoever is heir to thought, is heir also to the ideas which every thought contains, and which science afterwards presents with all its own apparatus, under the appalling title of laws, principles and categories. In their simple and primitive form these ideas are everywhere the same, and this primitive state is in a manner the state of innocence, the golden age of thought."

The foregoing extracts may serve to give an outline of Cousin's own system with regard to the question of the Absolute. His philosophy, as he himself describes it, is simply that enlightened Spiritualism "which began with Socrates and Plato, which the Gospel spread abroad in the world, and which Descartes placed under the severe form of modern thought."

The reader will not need to be told that Cousin's spontaneous apperception is the same simple and solid basis on which Descartes established the Absolute. The famous *Cogito ergo sum*, and the proof of the existence of God, have no other foundation. Descartes passes directly from Idea to Being by the pure fact of the Idea. There is in me the idea of God; assuredly it is not here through any agency of my own, nor can it come from the natural world, for the idea of the infinite and per-

fect is opposed to that, consequently it comes from God; that is, it reveals its object; God exists. The father of modern philosophy too often indeed abandons his own method, as new to himself as to his age, and turns from the natural logic of the immediate intuition to fortify his positions by the logic of the schools; he had not sounded to a sufficient depth the nature of reason, by distinguishing it from the personality, and showing that it is in man, but is not man; and so he was not always able to show convincing grounds for his firm belief in the truth of the intuitions of reason, as revelations of objective existence. But skepticism had not then intrenched itself so strongly, and the same forces were not called for to overthrow Gassendi as were afterwards needed to encounter Kant.

The powerful effect of the Kantian philosophy on the German mind may be appreciated in the writer who, more fully than any other, was the expression of the spirit of his age.

It perhaps has not been considered that Goethe's Faust was in some degree the product of this latest phase of thought. And what a commentary upon it it is! Faust is introduced to us sinking into a dreary skepticism, in the bitterness of disappointment at his fruitless efforts to attain to knowledge. Truth is a phantasm, or if it exist, how can the mind ever know it, how can we anywhere reach certainty? His active intellect tosses about in a feverish restlessness. His faith in his own reason gone, all faith is gone; Theology, the piety of the Intellect, Religion, the piety of the Sentiments, desert him. He falls back on the finite and negative for ground to stand upon. Here at least he can find demonstration. He yields himself to the guidance of his Sense-Understanding—the "wisdom of this world, earthly, sensual, devilish,"—for the real Mephistopheles is within Faust, and within every human soul; hence follows the catastrophe, and his ruin.

THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF SPIRIT.

Translated from the German of G. W. F. HEGEL.

[The preface and introduction to this remarkable work are omitted for the present, although they belong to the most valuable of Hegel's writings. We commence with the scientific exposition at once. All marks of subdivision, included in brackets, [], are not in the original, but are employed here in order to facilitate reference to the portions taken up in the commentary, which follows.—EDITOR.]

A. CONSCIOUSNESS.

The Sensuous Certitude, or the This and the Meaning.

[P. 71 orig.] [a.] The knowing which is, at first or immediately, our object, can be no other than that which is itself immediate knowing—a knowing of the immediate or the existent [*seyenden* = that which is]. We have, likewise, to conduct ourselves toward it, in an immediate manner, i. e. *apprehending* it, and taking care to change nothing that is presented in it,—in short, we must simply *apprehend* and hold back all tendency to *comprehend* [i. e. all activity of reflection and Reason].

[b.] The concrete content of the sensuous

certitude appears immediately as the *richest* knowing, even as a knowing of infinite wealth, for which no limit is to be found, whether we go out into space and time in which it expands itself, or whether, selecting a specimen out of this fullness we go through analysis into the same. Besides this, it appears as the most true; for it has omitted nothing from the object, but has the same before it in its entire completeness. This certitude, however, turns out in point of fact to be the most abstract and poorest truth. It says, of what it knows, only this: It is; and its truth contains merely the *being* of the subject-matter [*sache*]; the consciousness for its part, in this certitude, is merely as pure *Ego*; or